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JOHN GODFREY ARENDS

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JOHN GODFREY ARENDS:  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

by

Austin M. Allran

Dec. 20, 1912



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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The purpose of this study is to offer a brief biographical sketch of the pioneer Lutheran minister, John Godfrey Arends. I have not attempted to give any sort of comprehensive history of the beginnings of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina or of the men involved in building it, except when such history dealt with the life of Arends. I have consulted every source of information of which I am cognizant pertaining to my subject: secondary source books, newspaper clippings, primary sources in English and in German via various translations, as well as courthouse records, descendants of Arends, and Arends' own Journal and Last Will and Testament (in translation). To my knowledge, this sketch is the only work devoted solely to a chronological history of Arends' life. The Chronology per se is, I am certain, an original compilation. I have been forced to rely heavily upon secondary sources or the primary sources of Arends' contemporaries, as there are now extant no primary sources by Arends himself other than his Journal and Last Will. Whenever I have included material from an uncertain or unknown source, I have acknowledged this deficiency in the footnoting. Also included in the footnotes is some partial bibliographical annotation.



# CHRONOLOGY

## John Godfrey Arends

Dec. 11, 1740--John Godfrey Arends is born near Goettingen, Germany

Oct. 7, 1751--land transaction between Simon Christoph Arends and Georg Christoph Arends

Feb. 28, 1767--date on title page of Arends' Journal

1772--Organ group goes to London and Hanover to petition for pastor and schoolteacher

Sept. 13, 1772--Arends and Nussmann leave England for America

1773--Arends and Nussmann arrive in North Carolina (Rowan County) (for two years Arends teaches the children of Organ Church)

1774--Nussmann moves to Cabarrus County

Aug. 18, 1775--Arends becomes the first man ordained a Lutheran minister in North Carolina (Organ Church, Salisbury)

July 4, 1776--Independence declared; Arends a patriot

Oct. 24, 1776--Arends marries Hannah Riddle

Jan. 8, 1778--Catherine born

1779--Arends buys 218 acres in the vicinity of Organ Church

Oct. 12, 1780--John born

Jan. 27, 1783--Elizabeth born

Mar. 21, 1783--Arends buys plantation in Rowan County

1785--Arends moves to Lincoln County

April 19, 1786--Hannah born

Jan. 30, 1789--Susan born

April 3, 1791--Jacob born

April 10, 1794--Frederick born



June 25, 1799--Mary Magdalene born

1800-1801--The Great Revival

1803--The North Carolina Synod founded: first session, May 2, 1803, in Salisbury (Arends already totally blind)

May 20, 1803--last will and testament

Feb. 8, 1804--Arends' grandson, Warlick Hoover, born

July 9, 1807--Arends dies, is buried in Lincolnton under Old White Church



## I. SCHOOLMASTER

John Godfrey Arends<sup>1</sup> was born near Goettingen, Germany, December 11, 1741.<sup>2</sup> Before he died at Lincolnton, North Carolina, at the age of sixty-six, he had become the first man ordained a Lutheran minister in North Carolina, the acknowledged founder of all the Lutheran churches west of the Catawba River, and the first president of the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church, which he helped found. During the Revolutionary War, he had taken the side of the Patriots. When on July 9, 1807, he died, a venerable old gentleman, he was given a patriot's

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1 I have found the name spelled Johann, Joann; Godfrey, Godfried, Gottfried, Gottfriedt; Ahrend, Ahrnd, Arend, Arends, Arendt, Arndt, and Arnt in various combinations. The original spelling usually appears Johann Gottfried Arends; the Anglicized spelling, John Godfrey Arndt. I have chosen to use the especially Anglicized spelling that Arends himself used when he signed his last will and testament, October 7, 1804.

2 I have found his birthdate given as 1741. The date I have used, however, is the one cited in his Journal.



burial and interred beneath the pulpit of the Old White Church in Lincolnton.

Although little is known of Arends' personal history prior to his arrival in North Carolina in 1773, a journal which he began while still in Germany (the date on the title page is February 28, 1767) contains a few entries of note dealing with his pre-American days. The earliest entry is dated 1751 and apparently deals with some of Arends' relatives:

Today between...Simon Christoph Arends, seller,... and brother Georg Christoph Arends, buyer,...a legal contract of sale was contracted. The first named Simon Christoph Arends sells of himself and of his male inheritors his third part of three Morgen<sup>3</sup> acres of land, and one half Vorling<sup>4</sup> of meadows ... situated before the town of Dransfeld (near Goettingen) to his brother Mr. Georg Christoph Arends of 40 Reichsthaler.

.....  
At the same time it was resolved by the two parties that if the inheritors of the buyer sooner or later dies without male children, the male inheritors of the seller have the right to buy back the sold ... land of 40 Reichsthaler.

The contract is notarized and dated Dransfeld, October 7, 1751.

Arends does not signify his relationship to these two brothers.

This understood familiarity, however, along with the fact that, according to historian Nabel Miller, the government sealed agreement "had been carefully preserved by Arends and included in his journal"<sup>5</sup> suggests that the relationship was close, the two men perhaps being

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3-4 German superficial measure.

5 Nabel Miller, "First Lutheran Minister Ordained in Carolina," The M. L. Journal, March 1, 1931.



Arends' brothers or his father and uncle.

Another reference to Arends' European family appears in the Records of the Moravians in North Carolina. A "Salem Diary" entry of April 10, 1786, states that one of the Moravian brothers on that date

had a visit from a minister, who last August suffered shipwreck, and who was now seeking his half-brother, the Pastor Arndt on the Catamba. In the shipwreck his wife and two children and some sixty-nine other persons were drowned.<sup>6</sup>

A "Bethabara diary" entry of the same date adds that the minister's name was Francis and that the shipwreck occurred near New York.<sup>7</sup>

The two entries are intriguing because they indicate that Arends' mother at some time re-married and that the product of this second marriage was a half-brother<sup>8</sup> who--like Arends--eventually became a minister. The fact that this minister's name is Francis suggests that Arends' mother's second marriage was to an Englishman, or at least a non-Moran.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, there are no further references to either Arends or his half-brother in the Moravian Records.

Beginning with the year 1772, however, Arends' life history has been preserved with more certainty. It was in that year that the newly organized Lutheran congregations of North Carolina deter-

6 The People of the Moravians in N.C., vol. V (1784-1792), ed., Adelaide L. Price, p. 2124.

7 Id., p. 2151.

8 The second entry cited says "step-brother."

9 Arends at the time of this entry was forty-five years old and has been living in North Carolina for thirteen years.



mined to send to Europe for a pastor and schoolteacher: none could be obtained either from within North Carolina or from Pennsylvania, which, although the largest colony of Germans in the New World, could not even meet its own need for ministers.<sup>10</sup> Hence, Christopher Rintelmann of Organ Church, Rowan County, and Christopher Layle of St. John's Church, Cabarrus (Mecklenburg) County, "were sent as a delegation to Europe, for the purpose of applying to the Consistory Council (Consistorialrath) of Hanover"<sup>11</sup>--at their own expense--to secure a German-speaking minister and schoolteacher of the Lutheran faith, as well as whatever financial and material aid they might be granted.<sup>12</sup>

Setting out on horseback for Charleston, where they set sail for Europe, Rintelmann and Layle took with them two letters of recommendation to the "Society for the Spread of the Gospel in Foreign Parts": one from Governor Tryon and another from the

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10 G. D. Bernheim, History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina. (Philadelphia: Sherman and Co., Printers, 1872), pp. 254-256.

11 Ibid., p. 256.

12 C. D. Bernheim and George H. Cox, History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and Missions of North Carolina (Philadelphia: Sherman and Co., Printers, 1902), p. 13.

The two Bernheim histories are the basic source of information not only for this study but for most of the later histories of the Lutheran Church.



Episcopal rector of St. Luke's Parish (Roman).<sup>13</sup> Governor Tryon's letter read in part:

Whereas sixty German families of the Lutheran Church ... in Roman County ... request of me to countenance their procuring a Minister and School-master in their own Language ... I do by these Presents refer to the Bishop of London and to the Society of the propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts the Consideration of the annexed Memorial, and recommend such charitable support as by them shall be thought necessary of carrying the said laudable purposes into Execution /February 1, 1771/.<sup>14</sup>

Because the headquarters of the Society was in London, this city was the first destination of the two travelers. "The Lutheran Court Chapel of St. James took up the plan with enthusiasm and donated more than eight hundred dollars."<sup>15</sup> King George III himself contributed "considerable gifts of money."<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, word was sent through the Court Chapel "to the Consistory of Hanover to assist this cause as much as possible."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Carl Hawser, Jr., Mainlandern on the Yadkin (Salisbury, N.C.: Roman Printing Co., 1965), pp. 38-39.

Although this is a very recent source, I use it purposely and in preference to some earlier sources because the author, a Professor of German at Texas Technological College, has translated and made use of such German primary sources as the Volthusen, or Neu- und Altpreußen, and the "Westcarolinische Kirchennachrichten" (archival in the Duke Duke Book Room, but which I was unable to translate), as well as the Galatien-Berichte, the Bernheim histories, and other sources.

<sup>14</sup> Galatien-Berichte, VIII, ed., Saunders, pp. 630-631.

Unfortunately, the narrative history on the German settlements contained in this volume is merely a condensed version of the Bernheim histories.

<sup>15</sup> Hawser, p. 39.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Hawser, p. 39, from W. K. Boyd and C. A. Kimmel: "German Emigration Concerning the Lutheran Church in N.C. during the Eighteenth Century" (North Carolina Historical Review, VII, 1930), p. 91.

<sup>17</sup> Hawser, p. 39.



From London, the commissioners journeyed to Hanover,

where they were again favorably received. The Consistory of Hanover readily granted their petition of a pastor and a school teacher and officially called the Rev. Adolph Nussmann as pastor and Mr. John Gottfried Arends as school-teacher. Bibles, hymn books, catechisms, other books, and a communion set were also provided.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, Johann Gottfried Arends embarked upon a new career in the New World. On the second page of his journal, he wrote, "Den 13 ten September, 1772, bin ich auf befehl des Koenigl von Goettingen abgereiset"---"The thirteenth of September, 1772, am I on royal command from Goettingen departed."

From Goettingen, Arends traveled to London where he was joined by Nussmann. From London, the two of them sailed for Charleston, where they landed in 1773. When Arends assumed his position as teacher in Rowan County, he was thirty-two years of age. He had graduated from Teachers' Seminary in Hanover, and that he was a fully qualified and experienced educator is attested by his credentials, given him by the Consistory of Hanover, and brought by him to America:

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18 Jacob Morgan, Bachman S. Brown, Jr., and John Hall, eds., History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina (The United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, 1953), p. 21. Cf. Helmsstedt Reports, p. 92 ff.

This is a sophisticated source written by scholars, and I have drawn from it often. The sources from which these editors have gathered information include among others: The Minutes of the Synods, the Bernheim histories, The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, by Dr. Socrates Henkel (1890), The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of S.C. (1924), The History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee (1930), The Moravian Records, The H.C. Colonial Records, the Helmsstedt Reports, and the Diaries of Paul Henkel and J. C. Arends.



Certificate of Johann Gottfried Arends as school-teacher to North Carolina, Oct. 16, 1772.

Of his most serene highness, most mighty prince and lord, George the Third, king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, and defender of the faith, Duke of Brunswick and Lüneburg, arch treasurer of the Holy Roman Empire, and elector, etc., real privy counselor and authorized president of the royal and electoral consistory of this place, also of the counselors of the church consistory, certifies herewith that the bearer of this, Johann Gottfried Arends, of Goettingen, in compliance with the desire of the Evangelical Lutheran congregation in North Carolina, namely in Rowan county, to have a capable teacher; and to this end, according to the attestations of the governor, has sent deputies, and his royal majesty and electoral serene highness, our most gracious lord, has commanded us to be serviceable to them; after due examination for such office, found him to be experienced, he also having promised, according to the custom of this country and the published appointment for a future school teacher, to conduct his office with all fidelity and diligence, and manifest obedience toward his pastor, modesty toward the congregation and love for the children.

"On the other hand we do not doubt that the congregation will amply remunerate his serviceable labor, and make his stay, as well as that of the pastor, agreeable.<sup>19</sup>

Upon their arrival, Arends and Nussmann settled near Organ Church, outside of Salisbury and began their vocations immediately as school-master and minister. Nussmann, however, remained at Organ only one year before moving to Cabarrus, leaving his former congregation without a regular pastor. Arends continued to teach the children of Organ for a total of about two years--until the middle of 1775. At this time, Nussmann realized that it would be absolutely impossible to service the needs of all the area Lutheran churches alone.

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<sup>19</sup> Bornheim and Cox, p. 14.



Accordingly, he turned for help to the only other well-educated man in the vicinity--James Grey Arends.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> A.R., p. 164.



## II. MINISTER, GENTLEMAN, PATRIOT

On August 28, 1775, the Rev. Joachim Duclow of South Carolina publicly ordained and anointed John Godfrey Arends into the ministry.

Dr. Jacob Hogen in his History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina states that:

the circumstances attending this ordination and the procedure thereafter remain in doubt. Past Minister of the North Carolina Synod, Bornheim and Co., contains the following: "Upon the request of the congregation (Organ) and with the approval of Pastor Kussmann, he was ordained to the Gospel Ministry, on the eleventh day after Trinity as attended by his Ordination Certificate." This Certificate is dated "Second Creek, Rowan County, N.C., August 28, Anno Christi, 1775, being the eleventh Sunday after Trinity." It is signed by Joachim Duclow, "Missionary and Inspector over South and North Carolina." No records have been found to indicate on what authority he acted as "Missionary and Inspector." A Rev. Joachim Duclow is said to have founded the Lutheran Church in the Southern District of South Carolina, and to have been preaching at St. Paul's in 1775. The place at which this ordination took place is generally supposed to have been Organ Church; and the Certificate seems to support this, since it was issued at "Second Creek, Rowan County, N.C." The regularity of Pastor Arends' ordination may be questioned, but there can be no doubt as to his zeal, willingness and effectiveness as a preacher and churchman.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, John Godfrey Arends at the age of thirty-four became the first man to be ordained a Lutheran minister in North Carolina.

At this point in his life, Arends had already become a highly respected member of the German community of which he was a part, and as time went on, his fortunes were to improve even further.



William Sharpill, in the Annals of Lincoln County, says that Arends was Chesterfieldian in manner and very proud of his light auburn hair which hung in ringlets reaching to his shoulders. He was blue-eyed and had a fair complexion.<sup>22</sup> The Rev. George H. Cox, in The Beginnings of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, says that Arends

was very particular as to his personal appearance and always neatly dressed according to the fashions of the day, and wearing gloves wherever he went, something very unusual among the hardy people of that time.<sup>23</sup>

Another writer has noted that Arends, as a man of "scholarly attainments and much ability, though living in the wilds of Carolina, never forgot his proper mode of dress, and until his death even when walking in the fields would wear his high hat and gloves and carry his cane."<sup>24</sup>

Arends' superior education and social status perhaps--even probably--lent themselves to a degree of snobbery, but this condescension on the part of the "educated elite" was not uncommon--and even understandable. The Rev. Charles W. Mason, a South Carolinian writing at this time, remarked in his diary that

the manners of the North Carolinians in General, are Vile and Corrupt--The whole Country is a Stage of Debauchery, Dissoluteness and Corruption--And how can

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<sup>22</sup> Sharpill, p. 70.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Sharpill, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> This quotation, I think, is from a newspaper clipping, but I cannot know the source.



it be otherwise? The People are compos'd of the Out Casts of all the other Colonies who take Refuge there. The Civil Police is hardly yet establish'd. But they are so numerous-- The Necessaries of Life are so cheap, and so easily acquir'd, and propagation being unrestricted, that the Increase of People there, is inconceivable, even to ourselves.

Marriages (tho' want of Clergy) are perform'd by every ordinary Magistrate. Polygamy is very Common--Celibacy much more--Bastardy, no Disrepute--Concubinage General--When will this African Stable be cleans'd?<sup>25</sup>

As for Religion in North Carolina, the Reverend wrote: "The state of Religion therein, is greatly to be lamented--If it can be said, That there is any Religion, or a Religious Person in it."<sup>26</sup>

Although Woodinson exaggerated the situation (and of course was influenced by his own regional and cultural prejudices), still the western areas of North Carolina at this time were the backwoods and most likely looked upon as "crude and uncouth" by the few educated men who lived there.

G. D. Bernheim summed up the situation of such men as Azends, in his description of the colonial North Carolina Lutheran clergy:

The Lutheran ministers of that period...were men of the noblest traits of character....

They were men of learning, and might have filled positions of honor and usefulness in their native country; ~~instead~~ they sacrificed all temporal advantages, in order that they might labor for the welfare of the souls of their neglected brethren in America, and build up the

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<sup>25</sup> Charles Woodinson, The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution, ed. Richard J. Hooker (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1953), pp. 80-81.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.



Church in that section of the country to which they had been sent.<sup>27</sup>

Upon the arrival in the New World, Bernheim says, "The privations and hardships which they had to endure" were so great as to

never be fully estimated without contemplating all the circumstances of colonial times; they not only felt the absence of relatives, friends of their youth, college and university associates, but also the want of frequent intercourse with ministerial brethren, of men of learning and refinement, of the refinement of the literature of the day, of the comforts of advanced civilization.... They were isolated and, so to speak, walled-in by the primeval forests, and were subjected to constant intercourse with persons who, whilst they respected, esteemed and loved their ministers, never could enter into their feelings of refinement, nor appreciate any intellectual conversation.<sup>28</sup>

But despite these disadvantages, Arends dedicated himself to the work of the Church and the betterment of the community.

Upon his arrival with Nussmann in North Carolina, Arends had taken up residence "on his own farm near Organ Church,"<sup>29</sup> around Salisbury in Rowan County. After having served for two years as schoolmaster to the children of Organ Congregation, his ordination into the clergy marked a new phase in his career. For the next decade of his life (1775--1785), Arends served as itinerant minister

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27 Bernheim, p. 263.

28 Ibid., p. 264.

29 Morgan, p. 265.



a vast territory embracing the present counties of Bolivar, Cabarrus, Randolph, Catawba, Lincoln, Davidson, Guilford, Stokes, and other sections. [He] traveled long distances on horseback in all kinds of weather, over bad roads and forest paths, to spread the Gospel among people who had long been without pastoral care.<sup>30</sup>

Before his death in 1807, Arends had served nineteen churches in this area, helping to found most of them.

As his home was near Organ Church, this congregation proved to be Arends' first charge. When Nussmann moved to Cabarrus in 1774, Arends assumed the pastorship, which he kept until 1785 when he moved to Lincoln County. The original Organ Church was built of hickory logs and was used by both the Lutheran and Reformed congregations.<sup>31</sup> The second building erected--in 1774, just prior to Nussmann's removal to Cabarrus--was probably a frame structure.<sup>32</sup>

The Rev. Arends "inherited" from Nussmann the pastorship of the other already established congregations. In 1775, he assumed the pastorship of St. John's Church in Salisbury and St. Paul's in Alamance County. He held the former position until 1785; the latter, until 1789. During the same ten-year period, he either assisted Nussmann or acted as a visiting minister at three other churches: Beck's Church, near Lexington in Davidson County; Friedens Church, Gibsonville, Guilford County; and Lows Church in Guilford County.

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<sup>30</sup> Hauer, p. 43.

<sup>31</sup> Dornheim, p. 244.

<sup>32</sup> Morgan, p. 263.



Moreover, Arends managed to found in his first year as a minister two additional churches: St. John's, near Conover in Catawba County; and Union Church in Salisbury. Hence, the Rev. Arends was ministering to the needs of eight congregations at once in the years 1775-1785. Furthermore, from 1780-1789 he served as co-minister with Nussmann at Lutheran Chapel, China Grove (Rowan).<sup>33</sup>

Two events of major significance in the life of Arends occurred in the second year of his ministry--the Colonies' Declaration of Independence from Britain and his marriage to Hannah Rudisill. Since 1772 when the Organ Church commission had petitioned King George for assistance, the Lutheran congregations in North Carolina had been under the supervision of the Consistory of Hanover and the University of Göttingen.<sup>34</sup> During the Revolution, however, the supervision of the Church in North Carolina

was placed in the hands of the professors of the Julius-Maximilians University of Helmstedt, in the County of Brunswick. Doubtless the parent Church in Hanover became indifferent to the needs of the Lutheran congregations in North Carolina, because the revolt of the American Colonies was against

King George III, who was also the Elector of Hanover.<sup>35</sup>

(Another effect

of the war upon the Churches in the Carolinas was the impossibility of having any correspondence with the

33. I have relied upon Bennet and Morgan for these dates, although in none of them are mentioned in Arends' Journal.

34. Bennet, p. 257.

35. Ibid., p. 258.



parent Church in Europe, owing to the interruption of all commercial intercourse with foreign nations. This deprived the congregations of the sympathy and aid of their brethren in the Fatherland, and terminated the supply of ministers, books, and donations in money for the good of the Church in these two Provinces as long as the war lasted.<sup>36</sup>

Despite the fact that Arends' congregations received financial assistance from territory under the rule of George III, and despite the fact that Arends, as a minister, was "often harassed, persecuted, and at times in danger of [his] life,"<sup>37</sup> he took up the cause of American independence, defying both the British soldiery and the American Tories. That there was fighting in Arends' own ministerial district is attested by the Battle of Alamance, which was fought only two and one-half miles east<sup>38</sup> of his own St. Paul's Church. In his book, Our Kin, L. M. Hoffman describes Arends as a patriot,<sup>39</sup> and William T. Whitsett, in Founders of Church and State, states that the Rev. John G. Arndt was bold in his stand for liberty.<sup>40</sup>

Three months after the Colonies' Declaration of Independence from Britain, Arends married Hannah Rudisill of Rowan County. Legend

<sup>36</sup> Derrickson, p. 273.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>38</sup> Morgan, p. 328.

<sup>39</sup> L. M. Hoffman, Our Kin (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1971), p. 322.

<sup>40</sup> William T. Whitsett, Founders of Church and State (Whitsett, N.C.: Suber & Song Pub., 1966), p. 8.



has it that the gentleman-minister considered his new bride "not much of a North, but the best he could find" and that he was chagrined by her habit of "walking the wilds of Carolina bare-footed."<sup>41</sup> Whether or not this statement is actually based in fact is uncertain. It is, however, certain that Hannah, as a daughter of the pioneer Michael Ruliffill and a member of the large Ruliffill clan, had a considerable amount of native "family status" in her own right.

According to Laban Hoffman, "the North Carolina branch of the family was founded by three brothers who" moved from the Rhine Palatinate to England and thence to Philadelphia, where they settled at York, Pennsylvania. Later they moved southward to Virginia and North Carolina.<sup>42</sup> One of these brothers was Michael Ruliffill, Hannah's father.<sup>43</sup> Born in 1730,<sup>44</sup> he moved to North Carolina about twenty years later

from his temporary home in Pennsylvania and settled on Long Run, C. 25.... The country was then an unbroken wilderness but occupied by the Indian natives, with whom he and his family lived in peace and friendship.

Mr. Ruliffill acquired a very large body of land on both sides of the creek, portions of which were later acquired by...members of his family.

His [land] entry,<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> I was told this anecdote by a descendant of Arends' but have no proof of its validity.

<sup>42</sup> Hoffman, p. 2nd.

<sup>43</sup> IMA, pp. 305-306.

<sup>44</sup> Family records of Mrs. James Fowler, Lincolnton, N.C.

<sup>45</sup> Mentioned in the N.C. Secretary of State in Book 13, pp. 2nd, Hoffman, p. 307.



was dated May 17, 1754, and described as two hundred acres.<sup>46</sup> So it was that Michael Rudisill, born in Germany and settled in Rohn County, North Carolina, gained the status of pioneer and prosperous planter. On January 8, 1758,<sup>47</sup> his seventh child and second daughter,<sup>48</sup> Hannah, was born. On October 24, 1776, she married the Rev. John Godfrey Arends: she was eighteen; he was thirty-five.

Arends and Nuscman had learned from experience that to prosper<sup>49</sup> in the New World "depended upon one's ability to endure the rigors of frontier life."<sup>50</sup> Therefore, Nuscman had written to Dr. Velthusen in Hanover concerning the marriage of prospective pastors:

This one thing above all I wish and request: that no one come in here who has already married in Germany. It would be miraculous if he did not meet with a thousand sad experiences. An American (-born) wife is in our circumstances infinitely better adapted.<sup>51</sup>

There can be no doubt that the American-born Hannah Rudisill, as the daughter of a pioneer, was excellently suited to the rigorous life

<sup>46</sup> Hoffman, p. 347.

<sup>47</sup> Family records of Mrs. James Peeler.

<sup>48</sup> Hoffman, p. 348.

<sup>49</sup> The good the New England farmers did, is attested by an account given by the Colonial Governor Dobbs in 1775--Hammer, pp. 78-79.

<sup>50</sup> IBID., p. 80.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted by Hammer, p. 80, from the Halifax Reports, p. 125 ff.



of eighteenth-century western North Carolina.

The late marriage of Arends to Hannah Rudisill proved to be a successful one. On January 8, 1778,<sup>52</sup> their first child, Catherine, was born, and the following year (1779), according to Dr. Jacob Morgan, Arends "purchased 218 acres of land" in the vicinity of Organ Church. (When the Arends family moved to Lincoln County in 1785, Arends sold the land back to John Stirewalt [1786/].)<sup>53</sup> On October 12, 1780, Hannah gave birth to a second child and their first son, whom they named John in honor of his father. A third child, Elizabeth, was born January 27, 1783.

Since his ordination eight years earlier, Arends had been attending to the needs of his eight congregations. Moreover, "as frequently as the attendance upon the wants of [his] own regular congregations would permit," Arends visited "the other German Lutheran settlements in North Carolina."<sup>54</sup> The condition of the better farmers was prosperous, as a member of one of Arends' fellow-pastor's congregations said:

We have need of nothing and possess a great surplus above our wants. We are enjoying good health and everything is in good order on our plantations; and since we are possessed of such an abundance so soon after the war, we must certainly become wealthy if God continues to give us peace.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> These birthdates and all subsequent birthdates of the Arends children come from the Family Records of Mrs. James Peeler.

<sup>53</sup> Morgan, p. 263.

<sup>54</sup> Bernheim, p. 281.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in Bernheim, p. 332, from the Helmsdale Reports, p. 245. (Arnold Reichen, ordained 1768.)



Arends himself was doing quite well. In addition to the fact that "A portion of [his] salary consisted in the use of a certain amount of good land, which the members were to cultivate for him, and also to gather the grain, hay, etc., into his barn, when the proper season arrived,"<sup>56</sup> he apparently had managed over the years to accumulate a considerable amount of money beyond that necessary simply to live comfortably.

For on March 21, 1783, Arends, according to his Journal, purchased a plantation in Roman County in addition to the farm on which he and his family already lived: "Bond: Lewis Siffert, John Stigerwalt [sic], Peter Edelman to Godfrey Arends for £2000 concerning a Deed of Land." An excerpt from the contract reads as follows:

The condition of this obligation is such whereas the above L. Siffert, J. Stigerwalt, and P. Edelman have lawfully warranted and sold unto the said John C. [sic] Arends a certain plantation...paid by the said John Godfrey Arends, which plantation is situated in the County of Roman....

The bulk of the remainder of Arends' journal deals with some business affairs and church matters--the names of his various parishioners and the dates of baptisms, confirmations, and marriages. Two years after the journal entry of his purchase of the Roman plantation, Arends and his family moved to Lincoln County.

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<sup>56</sup> Berryman, p. 492.



### III. FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE LUTHERAN SYNOD

In 1795, Arends moved to Lincoln County "where a new and promising field awaited him, and where he accomplished much good."<sup>57</sup> Arends built a comfortable, two-story frame house about ten miles east of Lincolnton. He added a "separate room to be used for his study and library, the walls [of which] were lined with shelves to hold his" numerous books.<sup>58</sup> Many of these volumes were written in German, the language he used in the pulpit throughout his career. That he was in the process of learning to write English, however, is illustrated by a late entry in his Journal of the letters of the alphabet in English.<sup>59</sup>

Arends' home was only one mile from St. Luke's Church, a congregation the minister had organized while still the pastor of Organ.<sup>60</sup> But St. Luke's was only one of many churches that Arends served while living in Lincoln County. In all, he either helped organize, or was the first regular minister of, nine churches in the Catawba Valley. In 1785 he became the first pastor to serve Daniel's Church near Lincolnton, a joint congregation of Lutherans and Reformers whose fifty-acre tract of land had been granted to

<sup>57</sup> Bernheim, p. 231.

<sup>58</sup> Lena R. Brown, "Old Homes of Lincoln County," Lincoln County News, Lincolnton, N.C., 1940.

<sup>59</sup> Daniel Miller.

<sup>60</sup> Morgan, p. 309.



a member by King George on October 22, 1767.<sup>61</sup> In the town of  
 Lincoln, he became the first pastor of the Old White Church  
 (now Emanuel Lutheran), which he served as he did Daniel's from  
 1785 to his death in 1807. In this same twenty-two year period,  
 he served as the first minister of St. Paul's in the town of  
 Newton; Grace Church, near Newton; Zion, in Hickory; and St.  
 Paul's, near Newton.<sup>62</sup> In his Journal, Arends refers to this last  
 church--one of the oldest in Catawba County, dating back to 1768<sup>63</sup>--  
 as the "South Fork Church" in order to distinguish it from the  
 neighboring St. Paul's in Newton. The people of the vicinity  
 originally called it the "Dutch Meeting House."

Arends spent his years in the Catawba Valley busily ministering  
 to the needs of his many congregations. He traveled by horseback  
 from one church to the next, preaching, baptizing, and confirming  
 his parishioners. In the pioneer days, a minister was especially  
 needed to conduct funeral services and marriages. One minister, a  
 contemporary of Arends', described in a letter the procedure in  
 which marriages were performed:

He takes a certificate from [the  
 county court] along with his bride, and accompanied  
 by her father, to the house of the minister ...  
 or elsewhere, where the marriage takes place. The  
 first questions of the minister are: whether [the

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<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>62</sup> Again, *ibid.*, *ibid.*, and Arends' Journal.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, p. 329.



bridegroom<sup>7</sup> has taken the bride without her parents' knowledge ... and whether the parents have given their consent. If anyone has stolen his bride and has a license from /the county seat/, then the objections of the parents avail nothing.<sup>64</sup>

The other mode by which marriages were performed "was to follow the rules of the church by having the wedding announced on three successive Sundays."<sup>65</sup>

From the second year of the Rev. Arends' residency in Lincoln County to the turn of the century, the Arends family increased by five and his congregations by three. On April 19, 1786, the Arends' fourth child was born and named Hannah after her mother. The following year Adolph Nussmann resigned the pastorate of ~~Marareth~~ Church at Rural Hall in Forsyth County, and Pastor Arends became its second minister. The Arends' fifth child, Susan, was born on January 30, 1789. The following year Arends assumed the first pastorate of Bethel Church in Gaston County. A year later, according to Arends' Journal, he held the first communion service at St. Mark's Church at Crouse in Gaston County. In the same year (April 3, 1791), Arends' second son was born and christened Jacob.<sup>66</sup> Frederick was born April 10, 1794, and Mary Magdalene, John and Hannah Arends' eighth and last child, on June 25, 1799.

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<sup>64</sup> Arnold Roschen. Quoted by Hammer, p. 81, from the H.R., p. 244.

<sup>65</sup> Hammer, p. 81, from the H.R.

<sup>66</sup> Jacob Arends married Jane M. Rutledge, a relation of the South Carolina Rutledges, on July 15, 1823.



After coming to Lincoln County, Arends soon became a close friend of the Reformed minister Andrew Loretz.<sup>67</sup> According to Mabel Miller, Loretz was Arends' neighbor and associate in the ministry of the joint Lutheran and Reformed Congregation of Daniel's Church.<sup>68</sup> "So warm did the friendship become that an agreement was made between the two that [who]ever died first should be buried by the survivor."<sup>69</sup>

By this time, the condition of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina was a good deal improved over what it had been when Arends and Nussmann first arrived from Germany. Nevertheless, the various German communities still suffered from a chronic shortage of ordained ministers. Thus, in 1794, the first English Lutheran minister in North Carolina was ordained. The Rev. Robert Johnson Miller, a Scotchman by birth, "was license[d] to preach the Gospel in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church...and commenced preaching in the western counties of North Carolina, traveling"--as did Arends and the other ministers of his day--"often one hundred miles to meet his appointments."<sup>70</sup> Among

the congregations which he served was Whitehaven in Lincoln County. This was nominally a Protestant Episcopal Church, but Lutherans and possibly German Reformists participated in its activities; and the

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67 Mabel Miller.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

70 Bernheim, pp. 337-338.



congregation had, for sometime, been dependent upon Pastor Arends for the administration of the Word and Sacraments. The Episcopalians were highly pleased with the services of Mr. Miller; but since his license did not authorize him to administer the sacraments, and since there was no Episcopal Diocese in the state at that time, they petitioned the Lutheran pastors of Cabarrus and Roman Counties to ordain him.<sup>71</sup>

Hence, on the twentieth of May, 1794, a meeting was held at St. John's Church, Cabarrus County, where Arends and four other ministers examined and ordained the non-German Miller into the Lutheran ministry. Arends signed the ordination certificate, "Johann Gottfriedt Arendt,"<sup>72</sup> a spelling he was using at the time.

Six months later--on November 3--the old Rev. Nussmann died, making the ordination of Miller all the more timely. A few years earlier, the former, in anticipation of new ministers coming from Germany to aid those already in North Carolina, had described the ministerial life in the New World as follows:

We wear all sorts of dark colors, gray, brown, and blue. Since we always ride horseback on our travels, the more delicate colors would not serve our purpose...A good raincoat, if it is waterproof, is better than an overcoat and is necessary on our frequent travels. Good linen is scarce here and very expensive, consequently it would be good if our incoming brothers supplied themselves with it before they start. They can have shirts made here more cheaply than in Germany, and it would be better to bring their material uncut, but

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<sup>71</sup> Morison, p. 25.

<sup>72</sup> The original ordination certificate has been preserved by the Lutheran Church, the context of which is quoted by Bernheim, p. 399.



of medium grade and not much fancy stuff, for here we must pay more attention to wearing qualities than to finery. Boots are used in summer...Wigs we do not need. We wear our natural hair cut short... without any artificiality, without curls, powder, or the like. While at home, we wear thin clothes in summer. The dressing-gown is unknown here. Thin trousers, of wide cut and ankle length, are usually of linen, interwoven with blue threads. Black silk neckties are very convenient.<sup>73</sup>

This description of simple dress is especially interesting in light of Arends' alleged "charming manner,"<sup>74</sup> fashion-consciousness, and more sophisticated hair-style.

Perhaps this can partially be explained by the fact that Arends--regardless of any natural predilection toward "finery"--was financially successful both in Rowan County and in Lincoln. The Rev. Arnold Roschen, writing in 1789, said that "Arndt, formerly a catechist, now a preacher, possesse[d] two fine plantations, [was] wealthy, and edifie[d] his people by his life and conduct."<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, he described Nussmann, "a good and upright man," as "liv[ing] upon his plantation in very moderate circumstances."<sup>76</sup> About the clergy in general, he commented:

We ministers are treated with a respect, which is shown to no other person. There is no difference in rank acknowledged here, and yet

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73 Nussmann, quoted in Hammer, p. 82.

74 Lena R. Brown.

75 Arnold Roschen, quoted in Bernheim, pp. 333-334.

76 Ibid., p. 333.



no one has ever spoken with me, who did not hold his hat in his hand."<sup>77</sup>

He further noted that "in each church, there [was] service only once every four weeks."<sup>78</sup>

In the years 1800-1801, however, the most spectacular "services" moved out of the churches. At this time there began in Kentucky<sup>79</sup> and spread into the Carolinas a religious phenomenon referred to as the Great Revival. These mass meetings or "religious experiences" involved at different times convulsions, prostrations, the involuntary gnashing of teeth, strange exercises," and the "jerks."<sup>80</sup> The person "smitten" often experienced visions of God or death.<sup>81</sup> The Rev. Jethro Rumble, writing in 1878, in The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina, describes a camp meeting called by several ministers:

Dr. [Samuel E.] McGorkle was doubtful at first of the divine nature of the work, but [the Rev. Joseph] Hall [et al.] believed in it, and were anxious to see it begun in their own churches. Dr. Hall's people began to be exercised before they reached the ground, five miles off. On Saturday after the second sermon a speaker arose to deliver a short parting exhortation,

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77 Roschen, quoted in Bernheim, p. 333.

78 Ibid.

79 Jethro Rumble, The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina (Richmond: The Library of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1966), p. 65.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.



when as if by an electric shock a large number--men, women, and children, white and black, fell upon the ground and cried for mercy. Many professed faith in Christ; and it was observed that those for whom parents had long been praying, were among the first to obtain peace.<sup>82</sup>

According to Rumble, Doctors Hall and McCorkle described one of the convulsions as follows: "The heads of the jerking patients flew with wondrous quickness from side to side, and their necks doubled like a flail in the hands of a thrasher, their faces were distorted and black, and their eyes seemed to flash horror and distraction."<sup>83</sup>

Even though this "revivalism" began with--and was much more common among--the English churches, it had its effect upon the German denominations, as well. The Lutheran clergy of North Carolina was disturbed by the phenomenon. The Rev. C. A. G. Storck, who followed Arends in Salisbury and at Organ Church, wrote in 1803:

There prevails now, for over a year, a something, I know not what to name it, and I should not like to say fanaticism. Christians of every denomination assemble themselves in the forest, numbering four,

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<sup>82</sup> Rumble, p. 66.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 68.



six, and sometimes ten thousand persons; they erect tents, sing, pray and preach, day and night, for five, six and eight days. I have been an eye-witness to scenes in such large assemblies, which I cannot explain. I beheld young and old, feeble and strong, white and black, in short, people of every age, position, and circumstances, as though they were struck by lightning, speechless and motionless; and, when they had somewhat recovered, they could be heard shrieking bitterly, and supplicating God for mercy and grace.

After they had thus spent three, and many even more, hours, they rose up, praised God, and commenced to pray in such a manner, as they never were wont to do, exhorting sinners to come to Jesus, &c. Many of those, who were thus exercised, were ungodly persons before, and we can now discover a remarkable change in them. Even deists have been brought to confess Christ in this way....

Opinions are various in regard to it; many, even ministers, denominate it the work of the devil; others again would explain it in a natural way, or in accordance with some physical law; whilst others look upon it as the work of God.... This thing has occasioned me no little uneasiness. In our German congregations nothing of this kind has yet been manifested. Besides that, it is not known to me that something like it has taken place in Germany; but<sup>84</sup> in England and Ireland there are similar occurrences.

The Rev. Paul Henkel, writing contemporaneously,<sup>85</sup> said that

towards the close of the year 1801, there occurred a mighty waking up of religion among the English people in Guilford and Orange Counties, which caused our German people to understand the true worth of the gospel. Both the pastors and their people were surprised, for it appeared exceedingly strange to those, who were well acquainted with the order of salvation, that true conversion should consist in such a way as declared by these people; that true faith should originate in such sermons, which caused such corporeal convulsions, such representa-

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<sup>84</sup> The Rev. C. A. G. Storch, quoted in Bernheim, pp. 351-352.

<sup>85</sup> In the German minutes of a Virginia Conference held in 1806.



tions of the devil, death and hell; the fearful and awful expressions of lightning, thunder, hail, fire and brimstone against the sinner deprived many of their senses, and prostrated them in fainting fits.

As the like proceedings were upheld and defended by so many English preachers, and as many had declared, that by means of such workings they had received the true and reliable witness of the pardon of their sins and of the new birth, many of us hesitated to contradict such proceedings, although they were<sup>86</sup> thought so contrary to the doctrines of the gospel.

Because of their concern over this "outburst of intensive religious activity" and the "alarming deterioration of both faith and morals" among the general populace, the Lutheran ministers of North Carolina saw "the need for some authoritative organization."<sup>87</sup> As Henkel said: "The German ministers were at first divided in their opinions on this subject; nevertheless, it drove them to more intimate communion with each other in their official acts, and they had thus the opportunity to investigate this matter more closely. The Lutheran pastors formed themselves into a Conference (Synod)."<sup>88</sup> Hence, on May 2, 1803, Arends and three fellow-ministers met at St. John's Church in Salisbury with "fourteen lay delegates from various Lutheran<sup>7</sup> congregations"<sup>89</sup> and organized the North Carolina

<sup>86</sup> The Rev. Paul Henkel, quoted in Bernheim, pp. 352-353.

<sup>87</sup> Morgan, p. 30.

<sup>88</sup> Henkel, quoted in Bernheim, p. 353.

<sup>89</sup> John Godfrey Arends, Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, 1803-1826, translated by the Rev. F. W. E. Peschau, D.D. (Newberry, S.C.: Aull & Houseal, 1894), p. 3.



Synod of the Lutheran Church. The Rev. John Godfrey Arends was elected the first president.

Thus, as one of the founders, and first president, of the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church, Arends was making a historical contribution of national significance. Indeed, the North Carolina Synod was the third Lutheran synod founded in the United States. The first Lutheran synod in America had been founded in Pennsylvania in 1748; the second, in New York in 1786; the third was Arends' in North Carolina in 1803.<sup>90</sup>

But the general state of Lutheran affairs was not as good in 1803 as it had been some years earlier. Nussmann had died and two other area ministers had left the state--one had gone back to Germany; one, to South Carolina. Furthermore, Arends by this time was blind. As Pastor Storch wrote: "The congregations at the Catawba River are without a preacher. The faithful brother, Ahrend, has become totally blind. It is a sad calamity for that good man and the churches."<sup>91</sup> Lena Brown, in an article written in 1940, says that

his last years were spent in blindness and his daughter, Elizabeth, who married David Smith of Magnolia Grove, was his faithful assistant and did his reading until he became too feeble to continue his service as a minister of the gospel.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Paul Empe, "Lutheran Church in the Americas," The Encyclopedia Americana, vol. 17, 1969.

<sup>91</sup> Storch (1803), quoted in Bernheim, p. 348.

<sup>92</sup> Lincoln County News.



On February 8, 1760, Arends' daughter, Catherine, who had married John Hoover in Rowan County, gave birth to a son. Warfield Hoover was Arends' first grandchild; eventually there would be twenty-seven.

In his Last Will and Testament, Arends, at the age of sixty-two, divided up his estate among his wife and children. It was to Jacob, his second son, rather than to John, his first, that he bequeathed his Lincoln County plantation:

I give and grant unto my son Jacob Arends my plantation ~~That~~ I now live on, with all the Farming Utensils thereunto belonging to keep the same in repair and good order...also my Waggon, and Two Horses and Geers.... and I do further hereby...grant unto the said Jacob my son another Tract of land containing one Hundred Acres adjoining my plantation I now live on near my Springs and Milkhouse granted to me by States grant. And he shall on the first Day of April, which will be, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Twelve, but not before at which Time he is Twenty one years of Age, take full ample possession, of my said plantation, and other land hereby granted, and the then standing winter grain and seeds in the ground shall be deemed my property belonging to my personal Estate and Hannah my wife shall from the Time of my Death manage my said plantation as hitherto, at any time in my Life, on cause that the plantation, during the minority of my son Jacob may be kept in good repair, and order, to the use and Benefit of my Family, and further...shall use her utmost endeavor, that my Children, may be educated, and instructed, to a good Moral Life, according to the Rules and precepts of Christianity and neither purchase nor sell an thing unnecessary or contrary to that purpose....

Arends stipulated that his son would inherit the plantation on the condition that Jacob

annually at or about the first Day of January in every year after his minority find and provide, for the Mainte-



nance of my said wife, during her natural lifetime, Twelve Bushels of well cleaned Wheat, Twelve Bushels shelled Corn, one Hundred Weight of sound good and fattened pork, half a Hundred Weight of good Beef, Sixteen pounds Sugar, Eight pounds Coffee, Ten Gallons good Whisky,<sup>95</sup> and for yearly Cloathing he shall at the Beginning of each year pay the Sum of Five Dollars to her.

He further gave to his wife, Hannah, much of the furniture in the house, a share of the livestock, some cash, and "a Child's part of [the] estate to be unmolested and enjoyed by her as her lawful property, forever even if she at any...Time after [his] Death should contract Matrimony." Moreover, Arends stipulated that to Hannah would be given a part of the

Plantation during her Natural Life Time, [and] the new Rooms in the new Building adjoining my dwelling house on the East side to be possessed by her during life....

[And] if it should happen that my said Son Jacob by the will of God should die in Minority or without Issue, then my wife shall have full power and authority, to give all the Rights and privileges hereby granted to him, unto any one of my Sons, or she shall find most fit and proper to succeed, and my Executors shall have it in their power to make sale of all and singular Articles of my property which are unnecessary to uphold the Family, and my Executors shall sell a part of Land containing one Hundred and Sixty Acres, adjoining to the orebanks, on the Small Creek, and shall make a Deed for

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95 This contradicts an entry in his Journal which states: "Strong drinks, wine, liquor, and fresh smoked pork meat and all rich food must be avoided."



the same to the purchaser, and likewise my Negro wench shall be sold.

To his son John he bequeathed "one half, or Mostly all of /his/ Land, on the Branch called Pinch Gut," a horse, and farming implements. To each of his five daughters he left--in addition to some cash--articles of furniture, a horse, and livestock. As he put it, "It is my absolute will and meaning, that each of my daughters shall have the same." His youngest son, Frederick, received "the remain<sup>in</sup>g half part, that is, the lower part of that tract of land on the Branch called Pinch Gut," a horse, and farming implements. The will was written on the "Twentyeth Day of May, in the year of our Lord oneThousand, Eight Hundred and Three." He lived four more years.

The Rev. John Godfrey Arends died on July 9, 1807, and was buried beneath the pulpit of the Old White Church in Lincoln<sup>ton</sup>. The wooden church burned in December 1893 <sup>94</sup> and was replaced by a brick structure. In 1920, <sup>95</sup> a new church (Emmanuel Lutheran) was built across the street. At this time the graves of Arends and his wife Hannah were placed in the cemetery adjoining the original Old White Church. In 1972, one of Arends' churches, Old St. Paul's near Newton, and the adjoining German cemetery were selected for

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<sup>94</sup> Morgan, p. 197

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.



inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>96</sup> The Catawba County Historical Society has stated that "virtually all the Reformed and Lutheran congregations in Western North Carolina are grandchildren or great-grandchildren of the historic St. Paul's Church."<sup>97</sup>

Two decades earlier, as the feature part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the organizing of the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church, a memorial headstone was presented at the Old White Church cemetery.<sup>98</sup> This headstone contains the original grave-markers of the Rev. and Mrs. Arends. Arends' tombstone is inscribed in German, and translated, reads:

Here rests the body of the Rev. Johann Gottfried Arends.  
Having been a true Evangelical preacher, and died July  
the 9th, at the age of 66 years, six months and 28 days,  
of a kind of consumptive disease, after faithfully administering the office of preacher for 32 years.  
"Blessed are all those that die, like thou  
They to the rest of Heaven, shall come."

Below in English is written, "Remember, man, as you pass by, as you are now, so once was I; as I am now, you soon shall be, therefore prepare to follow me." An eagle, thirteen stars, and the motto of the then new republic, "E Pluribus Unum," bears witness to Arends' patriotism.

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<sup>96</sup> Hickory Daily Record, Hickory, N.C., 1972.

<sup>97</sup> Charles J. Preslar, Jr., ed., A History of Catawba County (Salisbury, N.C.: Rowan Printing Co., 1954), p. 97.

<sup>98</sup> Lincoln County News, Lincolnton, N.C., October 15, 1953.



Further honor was bestowed upon Arends in August, 1973. To commemorate the 200th anniversary of his arrival from Germany, a special celebration was held at Organ Lutheran Church at Faith, North Carolina (near Salisbury). During the service, a statue of the Rev. Arends was unveiled and presented to the church, the oldest Lutheran Church in North Carolina, which he had, of course, served faithfully for twelve years both as schoolmaster and minister.<sup>99</sup>

As for tribute paid Arends by his contemporaries, exemplary are the words of the Rev. Gottlieb Shober eleven years after Arends'

death:

We cannot be too thankful to Almighty God, for having every now and then awakened such luminaries in our christian sphere, as to cause by their talents and moderated gospel zeal, such evident and blessed revivals among ministers and hearers, that thousands were thereby from mere formal Christianity brought to the substantial enjoyment of the doctrine propagated by Luther, and lived and died under the means of grace, the word and sacrament, as true members of the Church of Christ. Such was Arndt....<sup>100</sup>

It was, indeed, Arends' "talents and moderated gospel zeal" which effected the building of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina.

Arends was a gentleman-scholar and a pioneer minister of unparalleled energy. He was also a patriot. He sailed to America at the age of thirty-two and taught school for two years. At the same time, he planted. Because he was college-educated and versed in the Lutheran catechism, he was ordained a Lutheran minister--the first such ordina-

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<sup>99</sup> Hickory News, Hickory, N.C., August 16, 1973.

<sup>100</sup> Gottlieb Shober, The Rise and Progress of the Blessed Reformation of the Christian Church (Baltimore: Schaeffer and Maund, 1818), p. 141.



tion in North Carolina. In his more than three decades as a minister, he served nineteen congregations, most of which he founded. He was elected the first president of the North Carolina Synod of the Lutheran Church--a synod he helped found--the third oldest in the United States. Having been a patriot in the Revolutionary War, his fellow citizens honored him, when he died, with a patriot's burial. He had come to America as a German, at the bidding of a group of North Carolina Colonials, under the sponsorship of King George; he died an American citizen. The legacy of this man who sailed to a New World, forsaking the security of familiar surroundings for a wilderness pastorate of thirty-two years, is now a part not only of North Carolina's history, but of the Nation's, as well. When the roster of Colonial Who's Who is complete, included therein will be the name, John Godfrey Arends, dedicated worker for Church and State.



CHURCH, LOCATION	DATE
Beck's, Davidson County (near Lexington)	1775-1785
Bethel, north point of Gaston County	1790-1807
Daniel's, Lincolnton	1785-1807
Emmanuel, Lincolnton ("Old White Church")	1785-1807
Friedens, Gibsonville (Guilford County)	1775-1785
Grace, Catawba County (near Newton)	1785-1807
Lows, Guilford County	1775-1789
Lutheran Chapel, China Grove (Roman County)	1780-1789
Nazareth, at Rural Hall (Forsyth County)	1787-1788
Orgen, Roman County (near Salisbury)	1775-1785
St. John's, Catawba County (near Conover)	c. 1775
St. John's, Salisbury (Roman County)	1775-1785
St. Luke's, Lincoln (near Lincolnton)	1785-1807
St. Mark's, Crossco (Gaston County)	1791-1803
St. Paul's, Alamance County	1775-1789
St. Paul's, Catawba County (near Newton)	1785-1807



St. Paul's, Newton	1785-1807
Union, Salisbury	1775-1785
Zion, Hickory	1790-1807



## LIBRARIES CONSULTED

Perkins (and Women's College Library)--Duke

Divinity School Library--Duke

Rare Book Room--Duke

Manuscript Room--Duke

Wilson Library--UNC  
(and the manuscript room in basement)

Rare Book Room--UNC

State Archives--Raleigh

Lincolnton Public Library--Lincolnton  
(for copy of diary)

Lenoir-Rhyne College Library--Hickory

Rowan County Public Library--Salisbury  
(for verification of a marriage date)



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